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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2356
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2007

In Today's Papers

Government Protested at Soldiers' Funerals

Hurriyet, Sabah, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Zaman, Yeni Safak and others report that three Turkish soldiers -- a lieutenant colonel, a major and a private -- killed over the weekend in PKK attacks in the southeastern province of Sirnak were buried Monday in separate funerals in Istanbul, Ankara and Manisa. Thousands attending the funerals expressed frustration with the mounting death toll from terrorism. During Monday's protests, the crowds also protested against the government, calling on the Prime Minister to resign. In Manisa, Parliament Speaker Bulent Arinc was met with strong protests at the funeral of a soldier killed by the PKK.

President Sezer, opposition CHP leader Deniz Baykal, the chief of the Turkish General Staff (TGS) Yasar Buyukanit, Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul and a number of cabinet ministers and top judges as well as opposition party representatives attended a funeral service at Kocatepe Mosque in Ankara. Thousands at the funeral applauded the force commanders and the military chief as well as President Sezer, while AKP cabinet ministers were met with angry slogans. The dead soldier's family refused to accept the condolences of government representatives with the exception of Deputy PM Abdullatif Sener, who said last week that he will not run for parliament in July 22 elections.

Meanwhile, papers report two more soldiers were killed by PKK terrorists in the southeastern provinces of Sirnak and Erzincan yesterday.

Security Summit to Discuss Rising Terrorism

Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Yeni Safak and others report

Prime Minister Erdogan and Turkish General Staff (TGS) Chief Yasar Buyukanit, Land Forces Commander General Ilker Basbug, Gendarme Commander General Isik Kosaner, and Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul will meet on Tuesday to discuss the security situation in the

southeast following a spate of attacks by the PKK terrorists. Cumhuriyet claims the meeting was requested by the government to discuss the fight against the PKK, including a possible cross border operation into northern Iraq. Media speculate that the group may decide to send a "last warning" to countries and international organizations supporting the PKK.

Editorial Commentary on Possible Turkish Incursion into Northern Iraq

Bilal Cetin in mainstream daily Vatan believes that the possibility of a cross border operation is getting stronger given the current tempo of terrorism, but it is unlikely to occur before the elections: "The security summit will provide a good opportunity for both military and government officials to express their thoughts to each other and increase understanding of each. In this context, Foreign Minister Gul's recent remarks 'We are ready for everything' should be noted carefully. Those remarks hint at a cross border operation in Northern Iraq when the time comes. This will be one of the main topics at today's security summit. At this point, we don't know what type of decision will be made at the summit. Nevertheless, there is growing speculation that the government may call for an emergency session of Parliament to pass a mandate authorizing a cross border operation. Still, even the availability of a parliamentary mandate does not necessarily mean an operation in northern Iraq is imminent. The government will continue making its calls to the Iraqi government and to the US with this mandate in hand. Whether this policy will produce any concrete results remains to be seen, but in any case, nobody in Ankara expects a cross border operation will happen before the elections."

Armenian Patriarch Mesrob II Visits TGS Chief General Buyukanit
Mainstream Hurriyet reports that Armenian Patriarch Mesrob II visited TGS chief General Buyukanit last week and extended his

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condolences for the martyrs who lost their lives in recent terror attacks. The Patriarch also relayed the latest concerns of Armenian community and said that the Armenian-Turks continue to live their lives in a rather anxious atmosphere because of the threats they receive. General Buyukanit reportedly told the Patriarch that the TGS will fulfill its duties relative to the issues Mesrob raised.

764 Independent Candidates for Parliament

Mainstream Sabah, Milliyet and liberal Radikal report that a total of 7535 candidates will run in the July 22 elections. 764 of them are independent candidates - a record number. In the last elections in November 2002 only 190 independents ran. A total of 14 political parties will compete in 85 election districts. Milliyet says 4192 of the candidates are university graduates, and 947 of them are primary school graduates.

TV Highlights NTV

Domestic News

- NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer arrived in Ankara on Monday to meet Prime Minister Erdogan, Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul, Defense Minister Vecdi Gonul and TGS chief Yasar Buyukanit today. Scheffer visit to Turkey comes shortly after Ankara objected to the participation of Greek Cyprus in an EU police mission.

- Former US Vice President Al Gore arrived in Istanbul yesterday for a conference on global climate change.

- Police are seeking four terrorists, two of them women, believed to have come from northern Iraq to carry out suicide bombings in northwestern Turkey.

International News

- Britain's next Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, made a surprise visit to Baghdad "to listen and learn" before he takes office later this month. Brown assured Iraq's leaders of continued British support.

- The Sweden-based International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) said in its annual report that global military spending rose 3.5 percent last year to USD 1.2 trillion.

- Germany will store digital fingerprints and digital photos in passports as a biometric security measure in an effort to fight organized crime and international terrorism.

WILSON